

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

Game Branch / HPC Project Number: 15-311

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Predator Management in Game Management Unit 16A - Year 2

Region and Game Management Unit: Region III, Unit 16A

Local Habitat Partnership Committee (LHPC):

- Kingman HPC

Was the project presented to the LHPC?

YES[X] **NO**[]

Has this project been submitted in previous years? **YES**[X] **NO**[]

If Yes, was it funded? **YES**[X] **NO**[] → **Funded HPC Project #(s):** 14-301

Project Type: Predator Control

Brief Project Summary: Coyote and mountain lion removal through hunting and trapping to reduce predation on mule deer in Unit 16A.

Big Game Wildlife Species to Benefit: Mule deer: decrease fawn mortality, increase fawn recruitment, increase adult survivorship, increase population.

Implementation Schedule (Month/Day/Year):

Project Start Date:
January 2015

Project End Date:
December 2017

Environmental Compliance:

NEPA Completed: **Yes**[X] **No**[] **N/A**[]

Projected Completion Date: _____

State Historic Preservation Office - Archaeological Clearance:

Yes[] **No**[] **N/A**[X]

Projected Completion Date: _____

Arizona Game and Fish Department EA Checklist: **N/A**[]

To be Completed by: Erin Butler

Projected Completion Date: M15 – 0318033125 through Dec 2020

PROJECT FUNDING

Special Big Game License Tag Funds Requested: \$ 50,000.00

Cost Share or Matching Funds: \$ N/A

Total Project Costs: \$ 50,000.00

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Applicant (please print):

Erin Butler

Address:

5325 N. Stockton Hill Rd.

Kingman, AZ 86409

E-mail:

ebutler@azgfd.gov

Telephone: 928-692-7700

Date: Aug 28, 2015

AGFD Contact and Phone No. (If applicant is not AGFD personnel):

Project has been coordinated with: Bureau of Land Management, Arizona State Land Department, Mule Deer Foundation, Arizona Deer Association, Kingman Region, Game Branch, Cane Springs Ranch, Byner/Walnut Creek Allotment owners, Yellow Pine Ranch

NEED STATEMENT – PROBLEM ANALYSIS:

This is a continuation of the predation control effort being funded by HPC proposal 14-301.

While habitat is the focus of WHEI, habitat cannot be the only aspect of the landscape improved if expectations are to increase the mule deer population for short term and long term timeframes. Unit 16A has a high predator population distributed throughout the area, and predation has been shown to be a contributing factor in recruitment in the mule deer populations. By addressing predation management in the short-term and habitat in the long-term, our objectives for the mule deer population should be met.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Data used to support the choice of Unit 16A for a WHEI focus area was based on the potential increase for permit levels and harvest levels; however these are long term changes that might not be able to measure within the scope of the three year period. While specific population objectives are difficult to set, and measure with consistency, the region can continue to track trends in the buck and fawn ratios, the total deer observed during annual surveys, and deer seen per hour of survey.

- a) Increase the fawn:doe ratio to at least 40 in 2017. The 3-year average (2011-2013) fawn:doe ratio is 22 and the long term average (1980-2013) is 40. Current guidelines for fawn:doe ratios are 30-40.
- b) Maintain the buck:doe ratio within or above current guidelines of 20-30.
- c) Increase the number of deer seen per hour of survey to the average number observed prior to 2006 (1990-2005) of 16 deer seen per hour.

Mule deer surveys will be conducted during the winter months. Population trends, ratio trends, permit levels and harvest levels will be monitored during predator control treatments.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGIES:

The goal of this project is to aid in the enhancement of mule deer populations in Unit 16A through increased removal of mountain lions and coyotes. WHEI funds, private landowner funds and labor cost share are being spent on a variety of habitat improvement projects from 2014 - 2017; including repairing defunct waters, building new waters, burns to open up chaparral and mastication projects to open up lower elevation desert scrub.

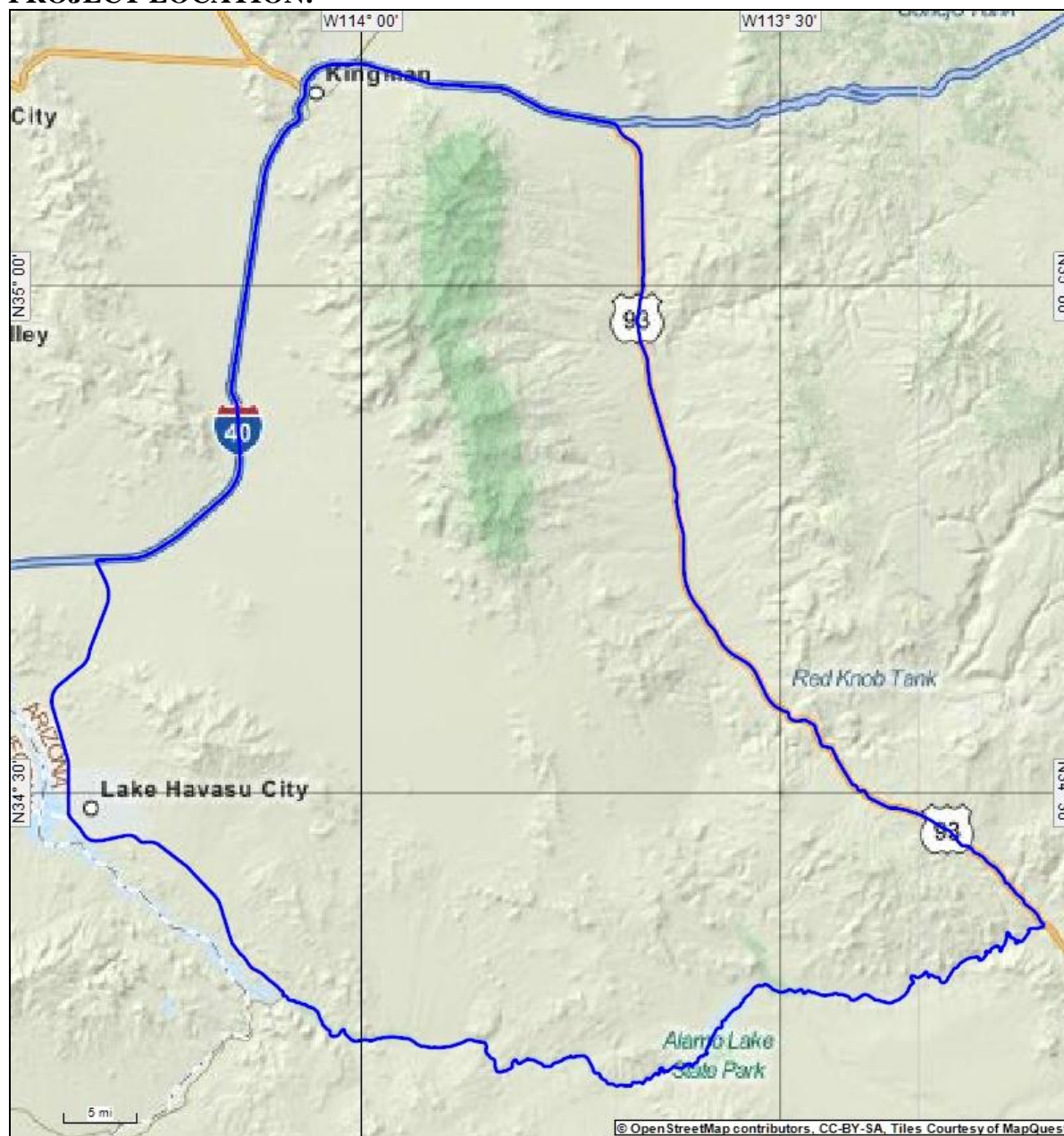
- Multiple Bag Limit (MBL) for lions - through the regular hunt recommendation process the Department will recommend continuing a mountain lion MBL season in all or parts of Unit 16A. Triggers and MBL levels have been determined and will be re-evaluated in the next recommendation cycle. If approved by the Commission, the season would start July 1, 2017
- Daylong Shooting Seasons for coyotes – through the regular hunt recommendation process the Department will recommend continuing a daylong coyote season in all of Unit 16A. Season dates have not been set, but will coincide with a timeframe to benefit mule deer fawning. If approved by the Commission, the season would start in the 2017-2018 hunt cycle.
- Contract Trapping for coyotes – private lands are exempt from the restrictions imposed by ARS 17-301D and the use of foot hold traps to control some predator species are allowed. Contract trappers may be used year round, outside of normal trapping seasons, based on the needs determined by the WHEI steering committee; however, the target timeframe is between January and May to curb the growth of the predator populations before mule deer fawning and from May to August to curb the predation on mule deer fawns.

It will be the responsibility of the trapper to ensure they are on those private lands for which the Department has obtained permission.

- Contract Predator Hunter for coyotes – public lands are open year round for coyote hunting. A contract hunter may be used year round based on the needs of the WHEI steering committee and would be useful in the project area since it is largely public lands.
- Contract Houndsman for mountain lions – public lands are open year round for mountain lion hunting. A houndsman may be used year round based on the needs determined by the WHEI steering committee.
- Promoting Unit 16A for predators - the Department will also work closely with predator hunting clubs and trapping organizations to increase coyote hunting in this area. The Department is hopeful that these organizations may focus their efforts to this unit during the duration of Unit 16A WHEI.

All non-target wildlife will be released immediately. No portions of any predators removed under contract by the Department may be possessed unless specifically permitted by the Department.

PROJECT LOCATION:



LAND OWNERSHIP AT THE PROJECT SITE(S):

(if the project area is private property, please state specifically and provide the landowner's name)

- Cane Springs Ranch, Anite Waite and Sherwood Kohen
- Yellow Pine Ranch, John Morotti
- Byner Allotments, Clay and Sandra Overson

*IF PRIVATE PROPERTY, IS THERE A COOPERATIVE BIG GAME STEWARDSHIP or
LANDOWNER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LANDOWNER AND THE DEPARTMENT?*

YES[X] NO[] N/A[]

HABITAT DESCRIPTION:

The majority of Unit 16A is made up of the Hualapai Mountains, a sky island habitat which grades from

desert grassland on the north end, Mohave Desert scrub on the east and west sides of the mountain range, and upper and lower Sonoran habitat zone in the south end. Lower desert habitats grade into pinyon-juniper and Arizona chaparral habitat at the mid-range elevations with ponderosa pines at the highest elevation. The southern third of the unit is Sonoran desert.

ITEMIZED USE OF FUNDS:

Special Big Game License Tag Funds

- Contract Hunter: \$20,000.00 per six months of effort.
- Contract Houndsman: \$30,000 per year for this effort.

Cost Share or Matching Funds (for volunteer labor rates please refer to the worksheet below)

- None at this point.

LIST COOPERATORS AND DESCRIBE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION:

WOULD IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROJECT ASSIST IN PROVIDING, MAINTAINING, OR FACILITATING RECREATIONAL ACCESS?

YES[X] NO[] N/A[]

PROJECT MONITORING PLAN:

PROJECT MAINTENANCE:

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY: Erin Butler

WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (please use the worksheet below):

TREE CLEARING/REMOVAL PROJECTS (please use the worksheet below):